

TAI-JI QUAN – MOVING FOR BETTER BALANCE

Program Goal: To improve strength, balance, mobility and daily functioning, and prevent falls in older adults and individuals with balance disorders.

Program Format: A one hour class conducted at least twice per week for 24 consecutive weeks or longer. The classes are progressive and consist of a warm up, core practice of individual forms and movements, and cool-down.

Program Development:

Dr. Fuzhong Li, PhD, and colleagues developed the evidence-based fall prevention program at the Oregon Research Institute. Dr. Li derived the program from a routine known as Simplified 24-Form Tai Ji Quan. Tai Chi is a martial art and recreation activity, and Tai Ji Quan Moving For Better Balance is a therapeutic training program to develop better balance and mobility in older adults.

“This exercise program helped me reduce stress and increase physical movement.”

Program Results:

Individuals who attend at least 75% of available class sessions experience improvement in balance and a reduction in fall risk. One review of research (which included nine studies) found Tai Chi has potential protective effects on cognitive ability in older adults.

Studies found participants had:

- significantly fewer falls*
- lower proportions of fallers*
- fewer falls with injuries*
- 55% lower risk of multiple falls compared to the stretching group*

Program Alignment: Results Washington Goal 4: Healthy & Safe Communities, Supported People, Quality of Life 3.2 to “Increase the percentage of long-term service and support clients served in home and community-based settings”. Healthcare Authority- Common Measures, #59- Falls with Injury and #55- Potentially Avoidable Use of Emergency Department.

Note: The authors used the term “Tai Chi” in these studies. “Tai Chi” and “Tai Ji” mean the same thing.

Find out more: www.tjqmbb.org and <https://livingwell.doh.wa.gov>

Key Words: fall prevention, balance program, group setting, self-management, health promotion

